

**A RIGHT COM-  
FORTABLE TREA-  
TISE CONTAINING SVN-  
drye pointes of consolation for them  
that labour & are laden.**

**WRITTEN BY D. MARTIN LV-  
ther to Prince Friderik Duke of Saxonie, be-  
ing fore sicke, thereby to comfort him in the  
time of his great distresse.**

**Englised by W. GACE.**



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1. 9. 113.



## *Martin Luther.*

**I** Did write this Booke in the beginning of my proceedings, to the most gracious Prince Friderick Duke of Saxony, when he was sore sick. Now many thought good that it should be imprinted, but when it had bene eftsones imprinted, it was so corrupted & made vnperfect, that I found many words wanting, which I my self could not coniecture what they were: how beit the sentences I haue restored after a sorte, and such as I thinke I had in the beginning. Neither haue I thought it good now to chaunge or adorne them as I could: For I will in this booke shew a testimonie of my proceeding, and gratifie the aduersaryes, that they may haue wherwith to exercise their malice. It is sufficient for me if I please my Lord Christ & his Sainctes: I reioyce from my heart, & giue thanks to my God that I am enuyed and hated of the deuill and his Impes.







TO THE VVOR-  
SHIPFUL M. HENRIE

DALE CITIZEN AND MAR-

*chant of the citie of London, VV. Gace wi-*

*sheth grace and peace from God*

*the Father through Christ*

*Iesus our Lord.*



Anifold are the miseries of mans life, wherwith he is greatly grieved and sundry wayes molested, insomuch as Iob sayth that man that is borne of a woman hath but a short time to liue, and is replenished with miserie. For he beginneth his life with teares & weeping, he passeth it with sorrow & trouble, and endeth it with dolour and payne. Wherefore it is no maruell if some haue thought that it is the best thing not to be borne, and the next to dye quickly: and that other some haue mourned and wept at the birthes of their friendes, and solemnly reioyced at their burialls. For what could they beeing destitute of the light of God and true religion, see in this life but trouble & miserie? Yea the godly themselves, as they haue in all ages suffered many afflictions in this life, so haue they passed through the same



## THE EPISTLE

as through a straunge countrye. For if heauen be our countrye, what is the earth else but a place of banishment? wherein being exiled from true delights and pleasures, we liue in a state vnquiet, troublesom, and many wayes miserable, as to him that shall duely consider the sundry troubles that are incident to all sortes of men in this life, wil easily appeare.

Forasmuch then as this life is so miserable, as both the Sainctes of God haue pronounced of it, the very heathen haue accompted it, and dayly experience proueth it, and yet neuerthelesse, we, seeinge God hath placed vs in it, must remayne therein till he call vs away: great neede we haue of such consolation & incouragement as may be a meane to make vs passe the time thereof without grudging and impatiencie. For of our selues we are very fraile & weake, not able to resist, much lesse of power to ouercome, as is manifest by the, who in the time of affliction haue through impatiencie murmured against God: albeit there both haue bene, and are many, who being not of them selues but by other meanes supported, haue patiently sustayned many troubles and miseries.

Wherefore I trust that my labour shall not be thought ill bestowed, but rather profitably employed, which I haue taken in translating this treatise into the Englishe tongue, for that it tendeth chiefly to the consolation of suche as are in affliction and distresse. For that which the title of this booke portendeth, the matter thereof sufficiently proueth, namely that it conteyneth consolations for them that labour & are laden, that is, that suffer



## DEDICATORIE.

fer afflictions and troubles in this life: so that they, which shall diligently reade and peruse the same, may be so confirmed thereby, that when they be troubled with hardnes of aduersitie, they may not be ouercome or throwne downe therewith: when they be molested with griefe & sorrow, they may be also delighted with spirituall ioy: when they be euen distressed with troubles and afflictions, they may receiue courage againe, being cheared with sundry consolations, and so patiently suffer according to Gods will whatsoeuer it shall please him to lay vpon them.

How great this commodity is, it plainly appeareth not onely by this, that the feeling of the present affliction is thereby asswaged, but by this also, that it is a meane to moue & make vs to obey Gods will, which otherwise we would be ready to resist, and to suffer patiently, whereas otherwise we would by impatiency be stubborne against the righteousness of God.

Wherefore forasmuch as I am not ignoraunt that the crosse is vsually incident to the godly, and that through many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of God, I am bolde to commend this treatise to all the godly in generall, to be reade of them to their singular commoditie and comfort, but especially to your worship, whose godly conuersation both of a long time hath bene, and daily is an euident testimony of your sincere and vnfeyned profession of Christ his religion: desiring you to esteeme therof, not according to the quantitie or outward appearance (for then shall you make but small accompt of it, being both litle in



## THE EPISTLE DEDICAT.

quantitie, and adorned with no eloquent tearmes, or glorious words) but according to the frute that the godly shall reape by diligent reading thereof. For pearles and precious stones for the most part are in quantitie but small, and in outward appearance simple, which in value notwithstanding are great and in vertue excellent. Howbeit being sufficiently perswaded of your well accepting hereof, I will not stande vpon this poynt, lest I should seeme in any wise to doubt of it, but doe desire Almighty God, that as you haue hitherto liued in his feare, so ye may dayly increase, and constantly continue in the same euen vnto the ende.

*Your worships at commaundement*

W. GACE.

TO





TO THE MOST  
FAMOUS PRINCE AND  
LORD, THE LORD FRIDERIK  
Duke of Saxonie, &c, his very good  
Lorde.



*O*ur Lorde and Sauour Iesus haue  
left a commaundement whiche pertaineth  
indifferently to all Christians, that  
we should performe the duties of hu-  
manitie, or rather (as the Scripture cal-  
leth them) the workes of mercye to the afflicted and  
miserable: that we shoulde visit the sicke, endeavour to  
deliuer the captiues, and doe suche like to our neygh-  
bour, whereby the present euills may be somewhat as-  
swaged. Hereof our Lord Iesus Christ hath in him selfe  
set forth vnto vs a most manifest & singular example,  
wheras of his exceding loue toward mankind, he came  
downe from the bosome of the father into our miseries  
and into our prison, that is, into our fleshe and most mi-  
serable life and tooke the punishment of our sinnes vp-  
on him self, that we might be saued: according as Esay  
sayth chap. 43. Thou hast laden me with thy sinnes, and  
wearied me with thyne ungodlines, &c. If there be  
any whom this so manifest & singular an example doth  
not stirre up, and the authoritie of Gods commaunde-



ment added therunto doth not moue to performe these  
workes of charitie, surely he shall worthely in the last  
iudgement heare the voyce of the angrie Iudge: Goe  
thou cursed into euerlasting fire. For I was sicke and  
thou didst not visit me, but being altogether unthanke-  
full for the exceeding benefits which I bestowed on  
thee and all the worlde, thou didst not even in the moste  
scleender duties relieue or helpe thy brethren, no not me  
Christ in my brethren.

Forasmuch therefore most famous Prince, as I see  
your Grace to be sore sicke, and that Christ also is sicke  
in you, I haue thought it my duetie to visit your Grace  
by writing somewhat vnto you. For I can not dissemble,  
that I doe not heare the voyce of Christ out of your  
Graces bodye and fleshe crying to me, and saying: Be-  
holde I am sicke here. For these euills, namely sickenes  
and such like, not we Christians onely, but Christ him-  
selfe also our Lorde and Sauour, in whom we liue, doth  
suffer, as he manifestly witnesseth in the Gospell:  
Whatsoeuer ye doe to the least of myne, ye doe it vn-  
to me. Now although we owe this duetie to all that are  
sicke in generall, that we doe visit and comfort them,  
yet doe we owe it chiefly to them that be of the hou-  
shold of fayth. For Paule doth plainly distinguish be-  
twene aliens, and them that professe the same faythe  
with vs, or with whome we haue some aliance. Galat.  
6.

Howbeit I haue other reasons also of my duty. For  
I know that I as one of your Graces subiectes, together  
with the rest ought to be moued with your Graces sick-  
nes, and be as it were sicke together with you, as the  
member with the heade, in whome all our good estate,  
safetie, and prosperitie consisteth. For we acknowledge  
your



your Grace to bee as a certaine Naaman by whome  
God at this day giveth health to Germanie, as in time  
past by him he gaue health to Syria. Wherefore euen  
the whole Romane Empire hath your Grace in ad-  
miration, doth reuerence and honour you as a father  
of the countrie, as a singular ornament and safegard of  
the whole Empire, but especiallie of the Germane na-  
tion.

Neither doe we owe this only to your Grace, to com-  
fort you as much as we are able, and as it were to beare  
the present case with you, but much rather to pray un-  
to God for your health and recouerie: which I hope is  
done with all diligence and endeouour of your Graces  
subiectes. As for my selfe, whom many notable bene-  
fites and pleasures haue made a detour to your Grace  
more then the rest, I acknowledge that I ought by some  
singular duetie to declare my thankfulness. But because  
in this splendernes of abilitie and power, I am able to  
performe no notable thing, D. George Spalatine, your  
Graces Chaplen, aduertised me that I should doe well  
to make some spirituall consolation and send it to your  
Grace, affirming vnto me that it would be a thing very  
acceptable vnto you. Wherefore I thought it not good  
to doe contrarie to the aduersisement of my friend, and  
therfore haue I gathered together these fourtene chap-  
ters, being comprised as it were in a table, and haue in-  
titled the \* Tessaradecas, that they might be in steede \* That is  
of fourtene Sainctes which our superstition made and fourtene,  
called the driuers away of all euills. Howbeit this is not or that  
a siluer but a spirituall table, wherewith, not the walls of which  
temples are to be adorned, but the godly minde is to be consisteth  
comforted & confirmed. And I hope that it will be ve- of that  
ry profitable to your Grace in this present state. Nowe number.



it is deuided into two partes, whereof the former containeth seven considerations of euills, whereby the present griefes and troubles are mitigated and asswaged. The latter containeth likewise seven considerations of good shinges tending to the same ende. Wherefore I desire your Grace to take this my simple labour in good parte, which I pray God ye may so enioy, that by diligent reading and consideration of this treatise ye may haue some ease. Thus concluding,

I humbly commend me  
to your Grace.

Your humble and obedient subject  
**MARTIN LUTHER.**

**THE**



## THE PREFACE.



He Apostle Paule in the 15. chapter of his Epistle to the Romanes speaking of Christian comfort, sayth : Brethren, Whatsoever thinges haue bene vrittē afore time, vvere vritten for our learning, that vve through patience & comfort of the Scriptures might haue hope. Whereby he plainly teacheth that our comfortes must be taken out of the holy Scriptures. Nowv the holy Scriptures vse tvvo sorts of comfort, in asmuch as they commende vnto vs the consideration of tvvo sortes of things, namely of euill things and of good things, according as the vvise man sayth: In the day of affliction remember prosperitie: & in the day of prosperitie be mindful of affliction. For the holy Ghost knowveth that euery thing is of such sort & so great to man, of vvhath sort and hovv great his opinion is therof. For that vvhich is couēted vile & nothing esteemed, doth litle moue, either vvith loue if it come, or vvith grieve if it depart. Wherefore he laboureth most earnestly



## THE PREFACE

to call man from the opinion & affection of things, vvhich vvhhen he hath brought to passe, all thinges are then indifferent. Nowe forasmuch as this calling is done especially by the vvorde, vvhereby the opinion is transferred from the thinge, vvhich is presently felt to the thing vvhich either is absent or not presently felt, it is by good reason that vve shal haue no comfort but by the Scripture, vvhich in the day of affliction calleth vs to the consideration of prosperitie, vvhich is either present or to come: also in the day of prosperitie calleth vs to consider affliction. But that these considerations may be more easie vnto vs, vve vvill deuide either of them into seuen partes. To the former shall be referred the euills vvhich are to be considered of a man: First vvithin him selfe: Secondly before him: Thirdly behind him: Fourthly beneath him: Fifthly on the left hand: Sixtly on the right hand: Seuenthly aboute him.

THE



I

# THE FIRST CHAP- TER OF THE FIRST CON- sideration, vvhich is of the in- vyward euill.

**T**his is certeyne and moſte  
true whether man beleue it  
or not, that no vexation can  
be in man ſo great, but there  
is in him ſome other euill  
greater then it: ſo many euills there be in  
him both moe in nūber & greater in effect,  
thē that which he preſently feeleth. For if  
he felt his greateſt euill in deede, he ſhould  
feelee euen hell: for he hath hell in him ſelfe.  
Dooſt thou demaund, howe? The Prophet  
ſaith: All men are lyers. And againe: Eue-  
ry man liuing is altogether vanitie. Now  
to be a liar and vaine is to be boide of veri-  
tie, and not to be in deede: but to be without  
veritie, & not to be in deede, is to be without  
God, and to be nothing: and this is to be in  
hell, and to be condemned. Therefore God  
mercifully chaſtening vs, openeth vnto vs  
and layeth vpon vs the ſmaller & lighter e-  
uills, knowing, y if he ſhould bring man to  
y knowledge of his greateſt euil, he ſhould

*Man hath  
hell in him  
ſe:fe, which  
is the grea-  
teſt euill in  
him.*



foorthwith perish in a moment: howbeit he hath giuen it to some to haue a feeling and taste of it, of whom it is sayd: He bringeth downe to the graue, & fetcheth vp againe. Wherefore they say rightly who call corporall sufferings certeine aduertisements of the inward euill. And the Apostle Heb. 12. calleth them the fatherly chastenings of God, saying: He scourgeth euery sonne y<sup>e</sup> he receiueth. Which he therfore doth, that by these scourges and small euills he may expell those great euills, least we should at any time feele them, as it is sayd Proverb. 22: Foolishnes is bound in the hart of the childe, and the rod of correction shall d<sup>r</sup>ieue it away. Are not godly parents also more grieued by their childe<sup>n</sup> if they be theeu<sup>e</sup>s or euill, then if they be wounded? yea they doe them selues beat and wound them that they may not be euill.

*Why God scourgeth euery sonne whom he receiueth.*

*God suffereth not mā to feele his greatest euil, & why.*

What therfore is the cause that y<sup>e</sup> greatest euill in man is not felt of him? truly as I haue sayd, by the ordinance of God it cometh so to passe, that man may not be utterly discouraged, if he should see his most inward & greatest euills. For God hideth the, & wil haue them scene by only faith, while he



That labour and are laden. 3

he sheweth them by the euill that is felt. Therefore in the day of affliction or when thou sufferest euill things, remember good things: consider how great a good thing it is not to know all thine euill, be mindful of this good thing, & the euill which thou presently feelest shall lesse disquiet or trouble thee. So again in y day when thou enioyest good things, remember euill things, y is while thou art not grieued with those that be very euils in dede, in this wāt of griefe be thankfull, & remember the very euils, then will it come to passe that thou shalt lesse feele the euill that is felt.

It is manifest therefore that the want of griefe is alwaies greater in man in this life, then griefe, not for that the whole euill is not present, but because there is no opinion, affection or feeling thereof by the goodnes of God, who hideth it. Whereupon we see them to whom it is geuen to behold their very euill, howe rigorous and cruell they are against them selues, howe they count it nothing whatsoeuer they can suffer in their whole life, so as they feele not their hell or greatest euill. So would euery one do, if he either felt or firmly beleued his



#### 4 Consolations for them

inward euil: he would of his owne accord  
call for outward euills, he should sporte in  
thē, & would neuer be more sad or sorrow-  
full, then when he felt none of them, as we  
know some of the Sainctes to haue done.

*The com-  
fort of the  
first consi-  
deration.*

Wherefore in the first comfortable consi-  
deration, a man may thus say to him selfe:  
thou doost not yet, O man, feele thine euil,  
reioyce and giue thanks, that thou art not  
compelled to feele it: & so a small euil be-  
ing compared with one that is very great,  
shall be made light and easie. Whereunto is  
pertinent the saying of some: I haue de-  
serued far worse things, yea euen hel it selfe:  
an easie thing surely to be spoken, but into-  
lerable to be felt. And this euil albeit it be  
hid, yet doth it shew forth his fruits sufficiēt  
griuous: these are feare & the vncerteinty  
of a trembling conscience, whereby faith  
is impugned, whiles man knoweth not or  
doubteth whether he hath God fauourable  
vnto him, which fruit is so much more bit-  
ter as faith is weaker. And this only infir-  
mity being well weyed, for asmuch as it is  
spirituall, is farre more griuous then that  
of the body, which it doth make euen most  
light, being diligently compared vnto it.

*Fruites of  
the greatest  
euill which  
is in man.*

Beside



That labour and are laden. §

To the inward evils of man pertaineth  
moreouer all that tragedie, which y<sup>e</sup> prea-  
cher describeth, wheras he so often maketh  
mention of vanitie & affliction of the spirit.  
For how many counsels do we take in vaine?  
how many of our desires are frustrate? how  
many things doe we see, how many things  
doe we heare which we woulde not? Euen  
those things which tend to the fulfilling of  
our desire, fall out oftentimes contrary to  
our desire, so that sundry waies we are mo-  
lested & troubled. Moreouer al these things  
are so much greater as one is placed in  
higher place or state, who must needes bee  
tost with farre more and greater scourges,  
waues, & tempests, then others that are in  
state inferiour vnto them, & troubled also  
with y<sup>e</sup> same thing, so that the 103. psalme  
sayth wel: small & great beastes, and things  
creeping innumerable, are in y<sup>e</sup> sea of this  
world, that is, infinite sortes of tentations  
wherefore Job. chap. 7. calleth the life of  
man a tentation. Nowe these are not there-  
fore no evils because they are litle felt, but  
because through vse & dayly custome they  
are nothing accounted of, and the feeling of  
them is by the working of God very much



abated and almost quite taken away: wherefore such as be rare and do seldome happen vnto vs, doe rather moue and molest vs, which as yet we haue by no vse learned to contemne. So þ it is true, that we doe feele scarce the thousandeth part of our euills: it is also true that our euills are measured, felt, or not felt, not according to their nature & greatnes, but according to the opinion and affection which we haue of them

The second chapter of the second consideration, vvhich is of the euill to come or before a man.

*Feare what  
it is*

*The euill  
to come.*

**I**t will not a litle lighten euery present euill, if thou turne thy minde to them that are to come, which are so many, such, & so great, that hereunto alone is referred that great and one of the principall affections which is called feare, which some define to be an affection of the euill to come, according as the Apostle saith Rom. 1. Be not hie minded but feare. This euill is so much greater as it is moze vncertaine, of what sort and howe great it will be when it come so that it is a common saying: There is no age to whom þ scab is not incident, which  
not wit



That labour and are laden 7

notwithstanding is an euill þ is wont to happen to children & infants. So that no man is free & quite exempt frō any euils which come to other men, but whatsoeuer one mā suffereth, the same also may an other suffer.

This is verified by the histories & tragedies of all ages, by all the complaints of þ whole world: by more then thzee hundred sorts of diseases, wherby mā's body may be troubled, as some haue well noted. If there be so many diseases, howe many other ill chances thinkest thou wil there be of other things, of frends, finally of the mind it self, which is the pꝛincipall subiect of all euils, & the onely receptacle of sorow and euills.

Howeouer the force & feeling of euills is so much more increased, by howe much the state is greater & more worþy, whē as po- uertie, ignominie, & all ill chaunces, seeing they may euen sodenly come, & do all hang as it were by a slender thꝛead, must needs bee feared euery houre, no otherwise then that sworde, which Dionyse þ tyrann boong ouer the head of his guest. Nowe whatsoe- uer of these do not come, it is to be counted for aduantage, & for no small cōfoꝛt against that euill that chaunceth, so that thou art

*It ought  
greatly to  
comfort vs,  
& moue vs  
to loue and  
praise God,*



that we be-  
ing in dan-  
ger of some  
ny evils,  
few or none  
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vs.

Death the  
most terri-  
ble & most  
certaine e-  
uill to come,  
yet the time  
of the com-  
ming there-  
of most vn-  
certaine.

here compelled to say with Ieremie: It is  
through the mercies of the Lord that wee  
are not destroyed. For whatsoever of them  
doth not chaunce, it chaunceth not, the right  
hand of the Highest letting or prohibiting  
it, which mightely p̄serueth vs on euery  
side as it is declared in Job, so that Satan  
and euills do euen as it were grudge and  
beare it vnpatiēty that they are so restrai-  
ned & prohibited. We see then how sweet-  
ly the Lord is to be loued, as often as any  
thing chaunceth vnto vs, forasmuch as by  
this one euill our most louing father admo-  
nischeth vs to consider howe many euills  
are ready to assaile vs, if he did not stay &  
let them: as if he sayde: Satan and a huge  
heape of euills desire to lift thee: but I haue  
set bounds to the sea, and haue said vnto it,  
hitherto shall thy swelling waues come, &  
here shall they stay, as he saith in Job cha.  
28. So that by his goodnes and restraint,  
few euills or none come vnto vs: howbeit  
that which of all terrible thinges is said to  
be the greatest, namely death, shall most  
certainely come, and nothing is moze vn-  
certaine then the houre thereof. Which e-  
uill is so great, that we see that many men  
had



That labour and are laden. 9

had rather live euen with all the foresayde euills, then they being ended to dye once. And to this one the Scripture also, where as it contemneth the rest, referreth feare, saying: Remember the end and thou shalt neuer doe amisse.

Howe many meditations, howe many bookes, howe many meanes and remedies are ordayned for the auoyding of the grievousnes of this euill? so that with the only remembraunce thereof it is vsuall to fray men from sinnes, to make the worlde contemptible, to lighten other sufferings & euills, & to comfort the afflicted by comparing their euils with so horrible & great an euill, which shall at one time or other of necessitie come. There is no man, who would not wishe to suffer all euills, if thereby he might auoyde the euill of death. This the Sainctes also haue feared: this Christ suffered with feare and swette like dropps of blood. So that the diuine mercy hath bene carefull to strengthen & comfort the weak & faint hearted in nothing more then in this euil as we shall see hereafter.

As for Christians they haue a speciall and proper cause to feare the euill to come,



## 8 Consolations for them

that we be-  
ing in dan-  
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That labour and are laden. 9

had rather liue euen with all the foresayde euills, then they being ended to dye once. And to this one the Scripture also, where as it contemneth the rest, referreth feare, saying: Remember the end and thou shalt neuer doe amisse.

Howe many meditations, howe many bookes, howe many meanes and remedies are ordayned for the auoyding of the grievousnes of this euill? so that with the only remembraunce thereof it is vsuall to fray men from sinnes, to make the worlde contemptible, to lighten other sufferings & euills, & to comfort the afflicted by comparing their euils with so horrible & great an euill, which shall at one time or other of necessity come. There is no man, who would not wishe to suffer all euills, if thereby he might auoyde the euill of death. This the Saintes also haue feared: this Christ suffered with feare and swette like dropps of blood. So that the diuine mercy hath bene carefull to strengthen & comfort the weak & faint harted in nothing more then in this euil as we shall see hereafter.

As for Christians they haue a speciall and proper cause to feare the euill to come,



## 10 Consolations for them

*What euill  
to come  
Christians  
ought to  
feare.*

which exceedeth all the foresayed euills: this is that which the Apostle setteth forth I. Cor. 10. saying: Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. So slippery is the way, so mightie is the enemy, being armed with our own proper strength (that is, with the aydes of the flesh and of all euill affections) accompanied with infinite bands & companies of the world, with delights and pleasures on the right hand, with troubles and the euill wills of men on the left, beside that art, a thousand wayes to hurt, seduce, and destroy, whereof he is most skilfull. We liue so that we are not sure of our good purpose so much as a moment. Cyprian speaking of many suche things in his epistle of mortality, teacheth that death is to be wished as a speedy helper to auoyde these euills.

*True Christians con-  
tinue death  
& all euills  
that they  
may be de-  
liuered fro  
the euill of  
sinne.*

And for the most parte men that be wise in dede. and do duely reuolue in their mind these infinite perils of hell, we see them, despising life and death, that is all the aforesayde euills, wish to be losed, that they may be also losed from this euill of sinnes wher- in they are, as we haue sayd in y first chapter, and into which they may fall, whereof we



That labour and are laden 11

we speake nowe. And surely these are two most weighty reasons, to moue vs not on-ly to wish for death, but also to contemne all euills, not to beare one euill onely lightly. For what true Christian will not wish euen to dye, and not only to be sicke, who seeth and feeleth, that he while he liueth in health, is defiled with sinnes, and continually may and dayly doth fall into moe, and so without intermission doth contrarie to the most louing will of his most louing Father? With this vehemencie of indignation Paule beinge moued (as it is declared Rom 7.) when he had complayned that he did not the good which he woulde, but the euill which he woulde not, cried out: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the bodie of this death? The grace of God, sayth he, by Iesus Christ, &c. He lieth loueth God his Father who doeth not choose rather the euill of death, then this euill of sinning, seeing that he hath ordayned death hereunto that this euill may at the last haue an end, and death may be the minister of life and righteousness, whereof shal be spoken hereafter.



The third chapter of the third consideration, vvhich is of the euill past or behind vs.

*We shall then chiefly perceiue the goodnes of God toward vs, & the care which he hath ouer vs when we consider our life past.*

**H**erein more then in y<sup>e</sup> rest notably sheweth the sweete mercye of God the father, which is able to comfort vs in all our distresse. For euerie man neuer feelethe the hande of God more present vpon him, then when he calleth to minde the yeares of his life past. Saint Augustine saith: If a man shoulde chose e<sup>th</sup>er to dye, or to leade againe his life past he would choose rather to die, considering so great perils & euills, which he hath scarce and hardly auoyded. Which saying is most true, if it be well & duely weyed. For here a man may see, how often he hath without his owne studye, without his owne care, yea without and contrary to his desire, done & suffered many things, wherof he did not so much as think before they were done, or in doing, that the worke being ended, then meruayling with him selfe he is first compelled to say: How hath it come to passe y<sup>e</sup> I haue done these thinges, which I did not thinke on, or thought



That labour and are laden 13

thought of other things? so þ the pꝛouerbe  
is true: Man purposeth, but God disposeth,  
þ is, altereth, & bringeth to passe an other  
thinge then man purposeth, that euen in  
this one thing we can not denie, that our  
life and actions are gouerned & directed,  
not by our owne wisdom, but by the mar-  
uelous power, counsell, & goodnes of God.  
whereby we may perceiue how often God  
hath bene w̄ vs, when we neither sawe nor  
felt it, and how cruely Peter sayd: Cast all  
your care on him, for he careth for you.

Wherefore if there were no bookes nor  
sermons, yet our life it selfe led through so  
many euills and perills, if it be well consi-  
dered, doth abundantly commend the good-  
nes of God to be pꝛesent with vs, and most  
sweete vnto vs, who hath farre otherwise  
then we either thought or felt, borne vs as  
it were in his bosome, and as Moses sayth  
Deut. 32. The Lord hath kept him as the  
apple of his eye, he hath led him about, and  
caried him on his shoulders. And hereup-  
pon came those sayings in the Psalter: I  
remember the time past, I meditate in all  
thy works, yea I do meditate in the works  
of thy handes: I will remember the won-



# 14 Consolations for them

*We ought greatly to be comforted in the present euil when we consider from how many euills God hath preserved vs in our life past*

ders of olde : And againe : I remembred thy iudgements of old, and haue bene comforted. All these and such like sayings tend to this end that we shoulde know, that if we see y<sup>e</sup> God was then present with vs, when we did not thinke thereof, neyther he did seeme to be present, we shoulde not doubt but that he is nowe also present, when he seemeth vnto vs to be absent. For he that protected and preserved vs in many necessities without our owne care or thinkinge thereof, he I say will not forsake vs in a small matter although he seeme to forsake vs, according as he sayth in Esai : A little while haue I forsaken thee, but with great mercifulnesse shall I take thee vnto me. Herevnto thou mayst adde. Who hath had care of vs so many nightes when we slept? Who was carefull for vs as often as we labored, plained, and did infinite other things, wherein we were nothing carefull for our selues?

*Why God leaueth vs sometime to our owne care, he*

Thus we see how at our care, whether we will or no, must be referred to God alone, we being very seldom left to our owne counsel or care, which notwithstanding y<sup>e</sup> Lord sometime doth, that he may teach vs to acknowledge



knowledge his goodnes, that we may perceiue howe much difference there is betwene his care & ours. ¶ Therefore he sometime suffereth some light sickness or other euill to come vnto vs, making semblance that he hath no care of vs (for in deede ther is no time when he careth not for vs) notwithstanding he doth in the meane season prohibit & let, that so many euills as are ready to assaile vs, doe not together on euery side come violently vpon vs, that he may try vs as most deare children whether we will commit our selues to his care being knowne of vs throught all the rest of our life, & marke how vnprofitable & impotent our own care is. For what doe we profit our selues or what can we profit our selues in al our life, who in a litle while can not cure & remedy one onely paine of some part of the body?

¶ Why then are we so carefull being molested w<sup>th</sup> some one peril or euill, & do not leaue y<sup>r</sup> care to him, when as our life it self being witnes, we are kept and preserved in so many euills without our owne labour or trauell? To know & duely to consider these things, is to know y<sup>r</sup> works of God, to meditate in his works, & by the remembrance

himselfe  
seeming not  
to care for  
vs.





## 16 Consolations for them

of them to be comforted in aduersitie and troubles: But they that are ignorant hereof shall fall into that which is mentioned Psal. 29. Because they haue not understood the workes of the Lord, nor the operation of his handes, thou shalt breake them downe, and not builde them vp. For they are vnthankful for all the care which God hath taken for them in all their life, who do not commit the care of them selues to him for a litle while.

The fourth chapter of the fourth consideration, vvhich is of the euill beneath vs.

**A**S yet we haue seene no other in all the euills which we suffer, but that y<sup>e</sup> goodnes of God is so great, and so present with vs, that among innumerable euills, wherewith we are compassed in this life, & wherein we are euen imprisoned, scarce a verie fewe, and those not at all times are suffered to assaile vs, so that euery present euill wherewith we are troubled, is but an advertisement of certaine great aduantage, which we haue through the goodnesse of God,



That labour and are laden. 17

God, whiles he suffereth vs n o to be oppressed with the multitude of euils where with we are compassed. For what maruell is it if one be assailed with infinit blowes, & be touched with some one alone: yea it is a grace that he is not stricke with all, a maruell that he is not stricken with many.

Nowe the first of the euils that are beneath vs, is death, the second, hell. If we consider the shamefull and vile death of others, wherewith sinners are punished, we shall easily perceiue, with how great aduantage we suffer lesse then we haue deserved. For how many are hanged, drowned, or stricken with the sword, which perhaps haue committed farre lesser sinnes then we, so that their death and miserie is set before vs of Christ as a glasse, wherein we may see what we haue deserved: as Luke. 13. when certaine shewed him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, he answered: suppose ye that these Galileans were greater sinners then the other Galileans, because they haue suffered suche thinges? I tell you nay: but except ye amend your liues, ye shall al likewise perish. Or thinke

*The euils  
beneath vs  
what they  
are, & how  
we may  
ake com-  
fort by the  
considera-  
tion of the  
first of them*



## 18 Consolations for them

you that those eightene, vpon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slue them, were sinners aboue all men that dwelt in Ierusalem? I tel you, nay: but except you amend your liues, ye shall all likewise perish. For we may not thinke that lesser euils are due vnto vs, who haue committed greater or like sinnes. Neither will the iustice and truth of God be vniust & false for vs, who hath determined to giue to euery man according to his deedes.

How we  
may take  
comfort by  
consideratio  
of the secōd  
euill be-  
neath vs.

Howeouer, in hell, & eternall damnation how many thousandes are there, who haue not committed the thousandth part of our sinnes? how many virgins are there, children, & they whom we call innocents? how many religious men, priests, &c. who in their whole life seemed to serue God, & perhaps through some one fall are punished for euer? Here must be no dissimbling, the iustice of God is y<sup>e</sup> same in euery sinne, he hateth & condemneth sinne alike in whom soeuer it be found. Doe we not here see the inestimable mercy of God, which hath not condemned them who haue so often deserued it? Howe muche, I praye you, is it which we can suffer euen in all our life, in respect



That labour and are laden 19  
respect of the eternall punishment, which  
they suffer hauing deserued it perhaps by  
one offence, we in the meane time being  
free, and saued from many sinnes which  
God passeth ouer and remitteth? Where-  
as we do not regard these benefits of God  
or make light account of the, it is through  
vnthankfulnes & a certaine senseles hard-  
nes of incredulitie,

Hereunto mozeouer are to be referred  
so many infidels, Gentiles, Jewes, vnto  
whom if those things had ben geue which  
are giuen to vs, they had bene, not in hell,  
but in heauen, and had farre lesse sinned.  
Examples hereof Christ setteth before  
our eyes Matth. 11. saying: Wo be to thee  
Corazin: Wo be to thee Bethsaida: for  
if the great workes which were done in  
you, had bene done in Tyrus and Sidon,  
they had repented long ago in sackcloth  
& ashes: but I say to you, it shalbe easier for  
Tyrus & Sidon at the day of iudgement,  
then for you. And thou Capernaum which  
are lifted vp vnto heauen, shalt be brought  
downe to hell: for if the great workes  
which haue bene done in the, had bene  
doone among them of Sodom, they had re



20 Consolations for them

mained to this day: but I say vnto you, that it shalbe easier for them of the lande of Sodom in the day of iudgement, then for thee. We see therefore what great praise & loue we owe to our most gracious God, in euery euill of this life, for that we tast scarce of one drop of them which we haue deserued, which Job compareth to the sea, and to the lande of the sea.

The fift chapter of the fift consideration, vvhich is of the euill on the left hande.

*The first comfort which the consideration of the euill on the left hand ministresh vnto vs.*

**H**ere we must set befoze our eyes that great company of aduersaries and euil men, and in them we must first consider, that they haue not done that euill to our body, substance, fame, soules, which they would haue done, if God had not stayed & restrained them: and the higher calling and state that one is placed in, to so many moe deceits, subtile deuises, sclaunders & troubles of the aduersaries is he subiect, in al which he may perceiue & feele the present hande of God, What meruail is it then if we be sometime touched with some one?

Secondly their owne euills are to be

con=



# That labour and are laden 21

considered of vs also, not that we should re-  
 toice at them, but that we should haue com-  
 passion on them. Nowe they also are sub-  
 iect to all the same euils, wherunto we are  
 subiect, as it may be easily perceiued by the  
 former considerations. Howbeit herein they  
 are more miserable then we, that they are  
 out of our societie, as well corporall as spi-  
 ritual. For this euill which we suffer is no-  
 thing in comparifon of that, that they liue  
 in sinnes, in infidelitie, vnder the wrath of  
 God, vnder the dominion of the deuil, most  
 miserable slaues of vngodlines and sinne,  
 so that if the whole worlde shoulde curse  
 them, it coulde wishe them no worfe. All  
 which if we doe thoroughly perceiue, we  
 shall also perceiue, with how great fauour  
 and blessing of God we, liuing in faith, in  
 the kingdome of Christ, in the seruice of  
 God, doe suffer some litle euill of the body  
 which in so great plentie of most excellent  
 things, shoulde not be so much as felt: yea  
 their miserie ought to bee so grievous to  
 him that hath a Christian and godly hart,  
 that he shoulde thinke his owne griefes de-  
 lightes. For so Paule willeth Philip. 2.  
 Looke not euery man on his owne things,

The second  
 comfort  
 which we  
 may take  
 by conside-  
 ring the e-  
 uil on the  
 left hande.



## 22 Consolations for them

but every man on the things of other men. Let þ same mind be in you, that was even in Christ Iesus, who being in the forme of God, tooke on him the forme of a servant, &c. That is, with most louing affection he tooke on him our forme, behauing him selfe no otherwise in our euills, then if they had bene his owne, so, as it were forgetting his owne good thinges, and making him selfe of no reputation, that he might be found altogether made like vnto men, suffering the euills that be incident to man for our sakes.

The Saints being animated by this affection, and by this example stirred vp, are wont to pray even for the euills of their enemies, & to do all things according to the example of christ, & forgetting their owne iniuries or righte busnes, to be careful how they make deliuer them from their euills, wherwith they are without comparison more troubled then w<sup>th</sup> their owne, as Peter w<sup>it</sup>-teth of Lot. 2. Pet. 2. who dwelled among them, which vexed his righteous soule from day to day w<sup>th</sup> their villawfull deedes.

Thou seest now howe deepe a pitte of euils here appeareth, & that we haue occa-  
sion



tion to take pity and compassion, & to forget our owne small euill, if the loue of God be in vs: thou seest also how little God permittech vs to suffer in respecte of those thinges which they suffer. But whereas these things do little moue vs, the cause is, for that the eye of the hart is not sufficient cleare, whereby we should see how greatly ignominie and miserie of man is lying vnder sinne, that is, being separate from God, & in subiection vnder the deuill. For who is so hard harted, that he is not greatly moued with pitie and compassion at the miserable sight of them that lye in the porches of Churches, and in the streetes, their faces being gnawne, their noses and eyes eaten with corruption, and their other members wasted with filth and rottennes, so that the mind detesteth to thinke thereof, much lesse can y<sup>e</sup> eie abide to behold it. But what doth God intēd and purpose by these miserable creatures, who haue like flesh as we haue, and are our brethren like vnto vs, but that he may open the eyes of our minde, whereby we may see in howe more ougly a sort the filth and corruption of the soule of a sinner appeareth, albeit he be clothed

*Why the  
euills of our  
aduersaries  
and euill  
men do little  
moue vs.*



## 24 Consolations for them

with purple and gold, and adorned with roses and lilies, as though he were a childe of Paradise. But howe many sinners are there in the worlde, to one of them whose bodies are full of filchy and corrupt sores.

Nowe these euills which are infinite as well in greatnes as in multitude, being contemned or not regarded in our neighbours, this contempt is the cause that our owne euill being even one of the least sorts, seemeth vnto vs to be very great, and that we thinke that no other are troubled with the like. But it must needes be that even in outwarde euills also they are in worse case then we. That, I pray you, can be delightfull or thoroughly pleasant vnto them, albeit they haue and enioy all thinges that they desire, when as their conscience can not be quiet? Is there a more grievous euill then the trouble of a stinging conscience? For Esai sayth chap. 57: The wicked are like the raging sea that can not rest, whose water someth with the myxe and grauell: even so the wicked haue no peace sayth God. Wherefore thou mayst see that verified in them which is written Deut. 28. The Lord shall giue thee an vnquiet.

*Euill men  
even in re-  
spect of out-  
ward euills  
are in worse  
case then  
the godly*



That labour and are laden. 25

quiet hart and daling eyes, and sorowe of mind, and thy lyfe shal hāg in doubt before thee: thou shalt feare both day and night, and shalt haue none assurance of thy lyfe. In y morning thou shalt say, woulde God it were night: and at night thou shalt say, Woulde God it were morning, for feare of thine hatt wherewith thou shalt be terrified, and because of those things which thou shalt see with thine eyes.

Bytelly, if one did with due affection see and consider all the euills of euill men, either of enemies or frendes, he woulde not onely forget his owne euills, and seeme vnto him selfe to suffer nothing, but also with Moses and the Apostle Paule earnestly wishe that he might die for them, and be rased out of the booke of life, and separated from Christ, as it is written Rom. 9 that they might be deliuered. Christ burning with this zeale and inflamed affection died for vs, and descended into hell, leauing vs an example, that we also should be so carefull for the euills of others, forgetting quite our owne, yea desirous of our owne.



The sixt chapter of the sixt consideration,  
vvhich is of the euill on the right  
hande.

*Howe we  
maye take  
comfort by  
considera-  
tion of the  
euill on the  
right hande*

**O**n the right hand are our frendes, by  
whose euills S. Peter teacheth y our  
euil may be mitigated, 1. Pet. 5. Resist the  
Deuill, saith he, stedfast in the faith, know-  
ing y the same afflictions are accomplished  
in your brethren which are in the worlde.  
The church also desireth in her prayers, y  
being prouoked and stirred by by the exā-  
ples of the Sainctes, it may imitate the ver-  
tue of their patient suffering, & singeth af-  
ter this sort, Howe great torments haue al  
the Sainctes suffered, that they might at-  
taine safely to the victorie of martyrdom?  
By which words & singing of y Church  
we vnderstand, that the feastes, memoies  
and names of Sainctes are celebrated for  
this cause among other, that we may be  
stirred by and encouraged to beare y same  
euills which they haue borne. By which  
meanes if they be not worshipped, al other  
kind of worshipping them can not be with-  
out superstition, as there be many who ce-  
lebrate



rebrate these things, that they may not suffer the evil which the Saints by their example & memorie teach to be suffered, & y they may be unlike them, whose feasts they haue that they may become like vnto them.

But the Apostle doth most excellently of all handle this place of comfort in the 12. chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, saying: We haue not yet resisted vnto blood, struing against sinne: & ye haue forgotten the consolation, which speaketh vnto you as vnto children: My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loueth, he chasteneth, & he scourgeth euery sonne that he receiueth. If ye endure chastening, God offereth him self vnto you as vnto sonnes: for what sonne is he, whom the Lord chasteneth not? If therefore ye be without correction whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sonnes. Moreover we haue had the fathers of our bodies which corrected vs, & we gaue the reuerence: should we not much rather be in subiection vnto the father of spirits, y we might liue? Now no chastising for y present seemeth to be ioyous, but grievous: but as



## 28 Confolations for them

terward it bringeth the quiet fruite of righteouſnes vnto them that are thereby exerciſed. Thus much ſayth Paule.

Who would not be terrified with theſe wordes of Paule, where he expreſſly affirmeth, that they are not the ſonnes of God, which are without the correction of God? And who can be moze ſtrongly confirmed, & moze effectually comforted, then he that heareth that they are loued of the Lorde which are chaſtened of him, that they are ſonnes, that they haue communion with al the Saintes, and that not they alone doe ſuffer? this vehement exhortation is able to make chaſtening and correction euen amiable and to be loued. Neither is here any place for excuſe, for that ſome doe ſuffer lighter euills, ſome thoſe that be moze grievous, for euery one is tried according to meaſure, not aboue his ſtrength, as it is ſayd *Psalm 80*: Thou ſhalt feede them with the bread of teares, and giue them teares to drinke with meaſure. The ſame Paule alſo ſayth: God is faithfull, which will not ſuffer you to be tempted aboue that you be able, but will euen giue the iſſue with the temptation, that ye may be able to beare it.

Where

*There ought not therefore to be impatiencie in ſuffering, becauſe all ſeeme not to ſuffer alike.*



That labour and are laden. 29

Where therefore there is a greater euill,  
there are more meanes to escape out of  
tentation, and more helpe, so that the in-  
equalitie of suffering is rather in appea-  
rance then in very deede.

Doth not the example of Iohn Baptist, *A notable  
example of  
the euill on  
the righ  
hand, most  
diligently  
to be confi-  
dered.*  
whose feast we celebrate at this day that he  
was beheaded of Herode, greatly amaze  
vs all, that so great a man, then whome a  
greater hath not risen amonge them that  
are begotten of women, the speciall friend  
of the bridegrome, y<sup>e</sup> forerunner of Christ,  
greater then all the Prophets, that such a  
one I say, was not put to death at the least  
by publike iudgement, was not at the least  
accused of some fayned crime, as Christ  
was, nor for the peoples sake, but at the re-  
quest of the daughter of an harlot which  
had daunced before Herode, was beheaded  
in the prison? The ignominious death of  
this one Saint, and his life so vilely and  
after so vnworthy a sort, yelued vp into the  
haudes of a most malicious and cruell a-  
dultresse, ought to lighten and assuage  
all our euill. Where was God here, who  
might see such things? where was Christ,  
who hearing this, did quite hold his peace



# 30 Consolations for them

He dieth as though he were unknowne vn  
to God, men, and all creatures. What doe  
we suffer, wherein, I will not say we may  
boast, but not at all be troubled, if it be com  
pared to the death of this man? Or where  
shall we appeare, if we will suffer nothing,  
when as so great men do vnderstandly suf  
fer so shamefull and ignominious death,  
and their bodys are mocked and scorned  
of their enemies after their death? Behold,  
sayth the Lord in Ieremie, they that men  
thought were vnmeet to drinke of the cup  
haue drinke with the first, & thinkest thou  
then to be free? No no, thou shalt neither  
be quit nor free, but thou must drinke also.

*A singular  
example of  
an Eremite* Rightly therfore did that Eremite, who  
when he had bene sicke every yeare, being  
at the last one whole yeare in health, was  
very sorrowful and wept bitterly, saying  
that God had forgotten him, & denied vnto  
him his grace. So necessary and wholsome  
is the chastening of the Lord to all Chri  
stians

*The suffer  
ings of the  
Saintes ve  
ry comfort  
able being  
well consi  
dered.* Therefore we shall see that it is little or  
nothing which we suffer, if we consider how  
the Saints were thrust vnder the nayles  
with sharpe prickes, how they were impri  
soned,



soned, slaine with the sword, burned, torne  
in peces w<sup>th</sup> wild beasts, & suffered infinite  
other torments: yea if we do but way p<sup>r</sup> ten-  
tations of them which are present with vs  
in this life, and suffer most grievous perse-  
cutions of the deuill. For there are which  
suffer moze sharply and grievously then  
we doe, as well in spirit as in body.

Somme say here: This I lament, that  
my suffering is not comparable to the suf-  
ferings of the Saints, because I am a sin-  
ner, & not worthy to be compared w<sup>th</sup> them.  
They suffered for their innocencie, I suffer  
for my sinnes, wherefoze it is no meruell if  
they suffered all things cheerefully. This  
is a very vnwise saying. For if thou suf-  
fer for thy sinnes, thou must reioyce, that  
thy sinnes are scoured: were not y<sup>e</sup> Saints  
also sinners? But fearest thou that thou art  
like Herode & the theefe on the left hand?  
Thou art not, if thou bee patient: for  
what made difference betweene the theefe  
on the left hand and him on the right, but  
patience in sayth? If thou bee a sinner,  
well, the theefe was a sinner also, but by  
patience he attained to the glozy of righte-  
ousnes and sanctitie: which that thou maist

Our sinnes  
ought not  
to hinder  
vs from ta-  
king com-  
fort by con-  
sidering the  
sufferings  
of the  
Saints.



## 32 Consolations for them

attaine vnto also, doe likewise as he did.  
 For thou canst not suffer but thou shalt suf-  
 fer either for sinnes, or for righteousness:  
 either suffering both sanctifie & make bles-  
 sed, if thou loue it, and suffer in faith: wher-  
 fore there is no excuse remayning. Finally  
 as soone as thou hast faithfully confessed  
 that thou doest suffer iustly for thy sinnes,  
 thou art righteous and holy, as the theefe  
 on the right hande. For the confession of  
 sinne, inasmuch as it is of faith, both iusti-  
 fie and make holy, and so in a moment after  
 such confession thou doest, not suffer for  
 sinnes, but for innocencie: for he that is  
 righteous doeth not suffer but innocently:  
 but thou art become righteous after faith-  
 ful confession of thy worthe suffering, and  
 of thy sinnes. Wherfore thy suffering may  
 truely and worthily be compared to the  
 sufferinges of the Saints, even as thy  
 confession of thy sinnes maye truely and  
 worthily be compared to the confession of  
 them: for there is on faith of all, one con-  
 fession of sinnes, one suffering of euills, and  
 one true communion of Saints in all and  
 through all.

The



That labour and are laden. 33

The seventh chapter of the seventh consideration vvhich is of the euill aboute vs.

**L**astly we must life by our hart on hie, & ascend by the mountaine of myrrre with the spouse. Here is Iesus Christ crucified, the head of all the Sainctes, the chiefe of all that suffer. The memorie of him is commended to the spouse where it is sayd: Set me as a seale vpon thine hart, & as a signet vpon thine arme. The blood of this lambe being stricken on the postes, suffereth not the angell the destroyer to approach. Where of is the spouse commended, that her heare is like purple (that is, her meditation is red by the memorie of Christes passion.) This is the tree which Moyses was commaunded to cast into the waters of Marah, that is, bitter passions, & they were made sweete. There is nothing that this passion doth not make sweete, even death; as the spouse sayth: His lipps are like lillies, that droppe pure myrrhe. Nowe concerning this likenes of lillies and lippes, forasmuch as these are red, & those are white,

The euil aboute vs, & the comforts which the consideration thereof ministereth.

Cantic. 5.14



# 34 Consolations for them

surely he speaketh mystically, that the words of Christ are most gentle and pure, wherein is no cruell bitternes or spite, but are sweete and mylde, which notwithstanding droppe and perswade pure and principall myrr (that is most bitter death.) These most pure & sweete lippes are able to make most bitter death (which as pure myrr taketh away at once all the styncke of sinne) sweete, mild, gentle, & acceptable. How shal this come to passe? Even while thou hearest that Iesus Christ the Sonne of God, hath by his most holy suffering consecrated & made holy all passions, even death it self, hath blessed malediction, hath glorified ignominie, hath enriched poverty. So that death is compelled to be þ gate of life, malediction the beginning of blessednes, ignominie the way to glorie. Now how canst thou be so hard harted & unthankful, that thou wouldest not even wish for & love all the passions which by þ most pure and holy flesh and blood of Christ are sanctified, made harmeles, wholsom, blessed and happy vnto thee?

For if by the touching of his most pure flesh he hath sanctified all waters to baptism,



That labour and are laden 35

time, how much more by the touching of y<sup>e</sup>  
same his most pure flesh and blood, hath he  
sanctified all death, all sufferings, all iniu-  
ries, all sclaunderes, all ignominie to y<sup>e</sup> bap-  
tisme of the spirit or blood? as he sayth of  
the same baptism of suffering Luke 12. I  
must be baptised w<sup>th</sup> a baptism, & how am  
I grieved till it be ended? Thou seest howe  
he is disquieted, how he is grieved, how he  
thirsteth to sanctifie & make amiable, pas-  
sions & death. For he saw that we were ter-  
rified w<sup>th</sup> passions, he saw that we did great-  
ly feare & dread death. Therfore as a most  
louing shepheard, and faithfull phisition,  
minding to moderate this euil, he makech  
hast & with grieve despatch to die, & by suffe-  
ring to commend the same vnto vs. So that  
the death of a Christian is to be counted  
like the brazen serpent that Moses set vp,  
which in euery respect resembled y<sup>e</sup> forme  
of a serpent, but was holy without life,  
without motion, without venom, without  
stinging: so the righteous seeme in y<sup>e</sup> eyes  
of the vnwise to die, but they are in peace.  
We are like to them that die, neither doth  
our death appeare any otherwise then the  
death of others, notwithstanding it is an

*The death  
of a Chri-  
stian.*



# 36 Consolations for them

other thing, for death is deade vnto vs,  
 So also all our other sufferinges are like  
 the sufferings of others, howbeit in appea-  
 rance onely, but in very deede our suffer-  
 rings are the beginnings of rest, as death  
 is the beginning of life. And this is that  
 which Christ sayeth John 8: If a man  
 keepe my woorde he shall neuer see death.  
 Howe cometh it to passe that he shall ne-  
 uer see it? because he dying, beginneth to  
 liue, so by reason of the life which he seeth,  
 he can not see death, For here the night  
 shineth as the day, for that the light of the  
 life beginning is more cleare, then of the  
 death ending. These thinges are certaine  
 to all them that beleue in Christ, but to  
 them that doe not beleue they are other-  
 wise.

Therefore if thou wouldest kisse, loue  
 and embrace the coate of Christ, the ves-  
 sels, waterpots, and whatsover thinges  
 Christ hath touched, and which he hath u-  
 sed, for most sweete relicks, as consecrated  
 by his touching and vsing them: why dost  
 thou not much more loue, embrace & kisse  
 paynes, troubles of the world, ignominie  
 and death, not only consecrated by his tou-  
 ching



That labour and are laden. 37

thing, but also embzued and blessed with  
his most pꛛecious blood, moꛛeouer embza-  
ced w̄ hartꝝ wil and exceding loue, which  
beheemently moued him therunto? especi-  
ally seeing ȳ in these thou hast farre grea-  
ter benefites, rewards & good things, then  
in those relicks. For by these thou obtay-  
nest victorie of death and hell, and of all thy  
sinnes, and not by them. O, if a man might  
haue beheld the hart of Chꝛist, when han-  
ging on the crosse he was distressed, that he  
might make death dead & contēpible, how  
earnestly & sweetely he embraced death &  
paines for the fearfull and them that dread  
death & paynes, how willingly he drōoke  
of this cup to the sicke, that we also might  
not be afraid to drinke thereof, while we  
see that no euill, but onely good came vnto  
him by risinge againe: without doubt it  
would be pure myꝛre, distilling from his  
lippes, most plesant and sweete, as the  
fauour and goodlines of the lillies. Hereof  
speaketh Peter in his first Epistle and 4,  
chapter: Inasmuch as Chꝛist hath suffe-  
red for vs in the fleshe, arme your selues  
likewise with the same minde. And Paule  
sayth Hebrewes 12, Consider him that en-

D



dured suche speakinge against of sinners  
least ye should be wearied and faint in your  
minde.

*What af-  
fection the  
considera-  
tion of the  
euill aboue  
vs ought to  
breede in  
vs.*

Wherefore if in the former considerati-  
ons, which are of things set as yet beneath  
vs or by vs, we haue learned to suffer euill  
patiently: surely by this last, which is of  
that y is now aboue & not by vs, we lifting  
vp our hartes vnto Christ, and being made  
victors ouer all euills, are taught not only  
to suffer them, but to loue, wishe, seeke the  
And the farther a man is of from this affe-  
ction, of so much lesse force is the crosse of  
Christ in him, as it is in them that haue the  
signe of the crosse, and Christs passion a-  
gainst euills and death, that they may not  
suffer nor die, endeavoring to attaine vnto  
that which is quite contrary to the crosse  
and death of Christ. Wherefore by this se-  
uenth consideration, whatsoever euill we  
suffer, must needes bee swallowed vp and  
consumed, so that now it doe not onely not  
griue, but also delight, howbeit if this co-  
sideration perse the hart, and be thoroughly  
fixed in the inward affection of the minde.

Thus much concerning the former table:  
the latter followeth.

We



That labour and are laden 39

**V**VE will deuide the scond table  
into seuen considerations also  
contrary to the former: whereof the  
first shall be of the inward good: The  
secōd of that which is to come: The  
thirde of that which is paste: The  
fourth of that which is beneath vs:  
The fift of that which is on the left  
hande: The sixt of that which is on  
the right hande: The seuenth of that  
which is aboue vs.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER

of the first consideration vvhich  
is of the invvard good,



Who is able to number euen  
those good thinges onely  
which every one possesseth  
in his owne person? First  
how many are the giftes of  
the bodye? as beantie, strength, health;  
quicknes of sense, whereunto in the male  
kinde may be added the mosse noble sex  
whereby he is fit to doe many thinges both

*The giftes  
of the body*



*Howe we  
maye take  
comfort by  
considera-  
tion of the  
giftes of the  
body.*

private and publike, and to atchieue many notable exploytes, whereunto a woman is vnapt. Nowe what a greate matter is it, if by the blessing of God thou enioyest these excellent gifts ten, twenty, thirty yeares in pleasure, & at the last art troubled in some one of them for the space of ten dayes? It is a common saying among nozious offenders: It is but one ill howres matter, and agayne, A good howre is worth an ill howre. What shal be sayd of vs, who enioy many good howres, and will not suffer euil so much as one howre? We see therefore in how great plentie we enioy the benefits of God, and with howe fewe euills we are scarce touched, at the least the most of vs. Our most gracious God not content with these good thinges, giueth mozeouer riches, abundance of all thinges, if not to all surely to many, and to them especially that are weake to beare euills. For as I haue sayd before, vpon whom he bestoweth lesse riches or giftes of the body, vpon them he bestoweth moze giftes of the minde, that all thinges maye be equall, & he a iust iudge of all. For abundance of riches doth not so much comfort as a ioyful mind. Mozeouer  
he



That labour and are laden. 41

he giueth vnto some goodly childe, great pleasure, power, rule, honour, fame, glory, fauour, &c. which if he permit to enioy a long time, yea but a small time, they will easily admonish what is to be done in a little euill.

But the giftes of the mind are more excellent then all these, as witte, knowledge, iudgment, eloquence, wisdom, & as in the other, so in bestowing of these he vseth a meane and equalitie, so that vpon whom he hath bestowed more of his good things, he hath not therfore preferred them before others, vpon whom in steede of these he hath bestowed other of his giftes and blessings. Now in all these we must with thankfullnes acknowledge the large liberalitie and bountifulnes of God, & comfort our infirmity, that in the multitude & plenty of good things we do not meruell, if some sharpnes be mingled therewith, seeing that to delicate persons neither roasted meate is liked without sauce, neither almost any other meate, which eyther hath not some sharpe taste of it selfe, or is tempered with some thinge that hath a sharpe tast, so vntollerable a thinge is continuall and onely sweetenes,

*Howe we may be comforted by consideration of the giftes of the mind.*



that one sayd rightly : All pleasure by continuance maketh it selfe lothefome. And another sayd : Pleasure it selfe at the last is a labour, euē because this life is moze weake then that it is able without the temperature of euills, to enioy onely good things, by reason of the ouermuch aboundaunce of good things. whereuppon hath risen this prouerbe, The bones must be strōg which shall beare good dayes, which prouerbe I oftentimes considering doe greatly maruell, seeing mens mindes contrary to them selues, who seeke no other but good dayes, which notwithstanding when they haue obtained, they can worse away with them the with euill.

Nowe what other thing are we taught hereby, but that euen in the very enemies of the crosse, the crosse is meruelous, so that by the meanes thereof all ought to be tempered and sanctified least they perishe, as fleshe must be seasoned with salt, least it stinke and coꝛrupt.

Why then doe we not most willingly receiue this tēperature sent of God, which if he should not send, our life which is not able continuallie to suffer pleasures & good thinges.



thinges woulde procure it of his owne ac-  
 corde? We see therefore howe truely the  
 wise man sayd of God: He reacheth from  
 one ende to an other mightely, and louing-  
 ly doth he order all things. If we throug-  
 hly consider these thinges, that also will ap-  
 peare to be true which Moyses saith Deut.  
 32. He hath borne him on his shoulders.  
 he hath caried him about, and kept him as  
 y<sup>e</sup> apple of his eye. Hereby we may stoppe  
 the mouthes of them which vnthankfully  
 babble that there are more euill then good  
 thinges in this life, when as there are not  
 wanting infinite good thinges and sweete  
 commodities, but they are wanting which  
 should see & acknowledge them with him  
 that sayd: The earth is full of thy goodnes  
 of thy Lorde. And againe: The earth is  
 full of his prayse. And psal. 103: The  
 earth is full of thy riches: thou hast made  
 me glad by thy workes. Hereupon we day-  
 ly singe: Heauen and earth are full of thy  
 glorie. Why so? because there are many  
 good thinges whereby he may be praysed,  
 howbeit of them onely which see and ac-  
 knowledge this fulnes. For as we haue  
 sayd in the first consideration of euills, that



# 44 Consolations for them

the euills of euery one are so great, as is his opinion & knowledge of them: so also good thinges although they come vnto vs abundantly on euery side. yet are they only so great as they are esteemed. For al thinges that God hath made are exceeding good, yet are they not so acknowledged of all, as of them of whom y<sup>e</sup> 103. Psalmes speaketh: They contemned that pleasant lande.

*Job may be  
a most ex-  
cellent ex-  
ample to  
moue vs  
patiently to  
suffer euills  
if the Lord  
send them,  
seeing we  
receiue so  
many good  
things at  
his hande.*

Of this consideratiō we may in Job see a most goodly & singular example, who, all his goods being takē away, said: Shall we receiue good at the hande of God, & not receiue euill? a very golden saying, & a mighty comfort in tentation. For he did not onely suffer him selfe, but was tempted of his owne wife to impatiencie, who sayde vnto him: Dooſt thou cōtinue yet in thy perfectnes? curse God & die; as if she shoulde say: It is manifest that he is not God, who hath so forsaken thee, why therefore dooſt thou trust in him, & not rather denying and cursing him, acknowledgest thy selfe mortall, vnto whō nothing shal remaine after this life? These & such like thinges doth euerie mans wife, that is his sensuality & corrupt vnderſtanding put into his mind in y<sup>e</sup> time  
of



That labour and are laden 45  
of tentation, because the sense fauoreth not  
the things that are of God.

Howbeit these are good things common  
to all but a Christian is endued with farre  
better inward good things, as with y<sup>e</sup> faith  
of Christ, whereof is spoken *Psal. 44. The*  
*Kings daughter is al glorious within, her*  
*clothing is of broydered golde.* For as we  
haue said entreating of the consideratiō of  
y<sup>e</sup> first euill, that there can be none so great  
euill felt in man, but there is some euill in  
him greater then that which he feeleth: so  
the best of the good thinges that are in a  
Christian he him self can not see. For if he  
did, he should be forthwith in heauen, for as  
much as the kingdom of heauen, as Christ  
saith, is within vs. For to haue faith is to  
haue the trueth & word of God: to haue the  
worde of God is to haue God the maker of  
all things. Which good things how great  
are they? if they were thoroughly reuealed  
to the mind, it should in a moment be losed  
from y<sup>e</sup> body, by reason of exceeding swete-  
nes and pleasure: wherefore y<sup>e</sup> other good  
things that we haue spoken of are rightly  
said to be as it were certain aduertisemēts  
of those good thinges, which we haue win,

*The inward  
good things  
of a Chri-  
stian.*



# 46 Consolations for them

which God will haue commended vnto vs by them, for þ this life can not suffer that they should be reuealed, and therfore God mercifully hideth them, vntill they haue increased vnto their full measure: no otherwise then louing parents do sometime giue vnto their childre trifles or things of small value, therby to allure their minds to hope for greater.

*Fruites of  
the most ex  
cellēt good  
thing in  
man.*

Notwithstandinge they doe sometimes shewe out and put forth them selues, when the ioyfull conscience reioyceth in trust in God, willingly speaketh of him, heareth his word with delight and pleasure, is ready and cheerefull to serue him, to doe good works, to suffer euils, &c. All which are infallible tokens of an infinitie and incomparable treasure hidden within, which distilleth forth these litle dropes in small measure: although it sometime cometh to passe that it is more manifestly reuealed to mindes that are giuen to diuine contemplation, so þ being as it were in a traunce, they can not tell where they are. Which S. Augustine and his mother with many other confesse to haue bene verified in them selues.

The



The second chapter of the second consideration, which is of the good to come or before a man.

**T**O them that are not Christians little comfort can be given in their euills by the good things to come, for that al things be to them vncertaine. Howbeit that notable affection which is called hope, beareth here a great sway. By which affection men comfort them selues and bid one an other hope for better things, whereby we vncertainly seeke after great things, being for the most part deceiued, as Christ teacheth of that man in the Gospell Luke 12, who sayd: I will pull downe my barnes, and build greater, and therein will I gather all my frutes and my goods: and I will say to my soule: soule, thou hast much goods layd vp for many yeres, liue at ease, eat drinke and be merie. But God sayd vnto him, O foole, this night will they fetch away thy soule fro thee, then whose shal those things be which thou hast prouided? So is he that gathereth riches to him selfe, & is not rich in God.

*Vncertaine  
hope.*



## 48 Consolations for them

*God doth  
not alwayes  
suffer our  
uncertaine  
hope to be  
frustrate, &  
why.*

Howbeit God leaueth not the children of men so, but in this affection to put away euill and attayne that which is good he comforteth thē: Albeit they be vncertaine of the things to come, yet doe they hope well, whereby in the meane while they are sustained, least that falling into the euill of desperation, they suffer not patiently the present euill, and so do that which is worse. Wherefore euen the affection of such hope is y<sup>e</sup> gift of God, not that he will haue them trust vnto it, but be moued to solid and true hope, which is in him alōe. For he is therefore slow to anger that he may bring them to repentaunce, as it is sayde Rom. 2: neyther doth he suffer men to be deceyued by this deceitfull hope, if so be they beginne from the hart and truely to hope in him.

But to Christians, beside these good things, two sortes of especiall good things shall assuredly come, howbeit by death and sufferinges. Now they also reioyce in that common vncertain hope y<sup>e</sup> the present euill shall end, and the contrary good shall be increased, although they doe not so much regard that, as they doe that their owne prosper



That labour and are laden. 49

per good is encreased, which is truth in Christ, wherein they goe forwarde from day to day, for which thy both live & hope: But beside these I have sayde that two especiall good thinges shall come vnto them in death. The first is, that by death the whole tragedie of the euills of this life is ended, as it is written: Precious in the sight of the Lord is y death of his Saints. And againe: I will lay me downe, and also sleepe in peace. Againe: Though the righteous be preuented with death, yet shall he be in rest. Whereas contrariwise to the wicked death is the beginning of euills, as the Psalmist sayth: The death of the wicked is very euill. Againe, Euills shall com vpon the wicked man in destruction: so Lazarus shall be comforted, who hath suffered his euills here, whereas the riche glutton shall be tormented, who hath here enjoyed his pleasures, So it commeth to passe, that a Christian whether he dye or liue, hath alwayes the better: so blessed a thing is it to be a Christian, and to beleue in Christ, whereupon Paule sayth Christ is to me life, & death is to me aduantage. And Rom. 14. he sayth: Whether we liue,

*Christians receive comfort by consideration of two especiall good things to come, whereof one is, that by death their afflictions of this life being ended, they shall be in rest and peace.*



*The other  
special good  
thing to  
come, the  
consideration  
whereof is  
comforta-  
ble to Chri-  
stians.*

troubles and afflictions of this life, but which is more excellent, it maketh an end of vices and sinnes, which maketh death farre more acceptable to the faithfull, as we haue sayd befoze, then the good which we haue now spoken of. For the euills of the soule which are sinnes, are without comparison worse then the euills of the bodye. Which onely if we did knowe, they would make death most amiable vnto vs. Now if they do not so, it is a signe that we do not sufficiently feele nor hate the euills of our soule. Whereas therefore this life is most perilous, dangerous (sinne seeking to deceiue vs on euery side, and we can not liue without sinne) most commodious death setteth vs free from these perills, & cutteth of sinne quite from vs, whereupon in the booke of wisdom it is said in praise of the righteous: He pleased God and was beloued of him, so that whereas he liued among sinners, he translated him. He was taken away lest wickednes should alter his vnderstanding, or deceipte beguile his minde. For wickednes by bewitching obscureth the things that are good, and the vnsatistastnes of concupiscence peruerteth the

the



That labour and are laden. 53

the simple minde ( Whome true are these things & confirmed by dayly experience? )  
Though he was soone dead, yet fulfilled he much time, for his soule pleased God: therefore hastened he to take him away from wickednes.

So by the mercie of God, death, which to man was the punishment of sinne, is made to Christians the ende of sinne, and the beginning of life and righteousness. Therefore he that loueth life and righteousness, must needes not feare, but loue death, which is the Minister of them, and meane to come vnto them: otherwise he shall neuer attaine neyther to life nor righteousness. Nowe he that can not doe this let him pray vnto God, that he may. For therefore are we taught to saye, Thy will be done, because we of our selues are not able to doe it who fearing death, doe loue death and sinne rather then life and righteousness. For that God ordayned death for the abolishing of sinne it may hereof be gathered, for that he entoynd death to Adam by and by after he had sinned, as it were amendments of sinne, and that befoze he cast him out of Paradise, that he might shewe vs



## 54 Consolations for them

that death worketh no euill, but all good vnto vs, seeing that it was enioyned in Paradise as it were repentaunce and satisfaction. It is true in deede that death entred into the worlde by the malice of the Deuill, but it is to be attributed to the singular goodnes of God that death being so entred, he not onely suffered it not to hurte, but ordayned it euen from the beginning thereof for the punishment and death of sinne.

For this he signified, whereas when he had first denouced death vnto Adam, in his commaundement that he should not eate of the tree of knowledge, he afterwarde notwithstanding held not his peace, but did againe enioyne death, and tempered the rigour of his first denouncing, yea did not so much as make mention of death in any syllable, but onely sayde: In the sweate of thy face shalt thou eate bread, till thou be turned againe into the ground, for out of it wast thou taken: Dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou be turned again. As though he then hated death, which he would not so much as name, according to that saying: He endureth but a while in his anger, but  
in



in his fauour is life. He seemeth in thus speaking, that vntlesse death had beene necessary for the abolishing of sinne, he would not so much as mention or name it, much lesse enioyne it. So against sinne which had wrought death, the emulation of God at-  
meth no other thing but death it selfe, so that here thou mayst see that saying of the Poet verified, that the worker of death doth perish by his owne worke, and that sinne is destroyed by it owne proper fruite and is slayne by death which it brought forth, as the viper of her offspring. This is a most goodly sight, to see how sinn is, not by an others, but by it owne proper worke destroyed, slayne with it owne weapon, as of Goliath, so y head thereof cut of with it owne sworde. For Goliath was a figure of sinne, a terrible Champion to all, except little David, that is, Christ, who alone ouercame him, and cut of his head with his owne sworde. If therefore we meditate vpon the ioyes of this power of Christ, and vpon the giftes of his grace, why should a little euill trouble vs, when as in so great an euill to come wee see so greate good thinges?

*The worker destroyed  
By his owne worke: sinne abolished by death  
which is it owne proper fruite.*



The third chapter of the third consideration, which is of the good past or behind a man.

*We are moved to the consideration of the good past, that is of Gods goodnes bestowed upon us heretofore, and so take comfort thereby, by the examples of Augustin David, and by our own experience,*

**T**he consideration of this good is easie, by the contrary consideration of the evil past, we thinke it sufficient only to help him that shal consider hereof. Wherein B. Augustin doth excellently well in his confessions, where in a most goodly sort he rehearseth y<sup>e</sup> benefits of God bestowed upon him from his mothers wombe. The same doth David in that notable 138. Psalm, y<sup>e</sup> beginning whereof is: O Lord, thou hast tried me, where among other things wondering at y<sup>e</sup> providence of God over him, he sayth: Thou understandest my thoughtes long before: thou compassedst my paths & my lying downe. As if he sayd: Whatsoever I haue euer thought, whatsoever I haue wrought, and whatsoever I was to obtayne or possesse, I see now, how it was not done by mine owne industrie, but ordained by thy care long before, & finally thou hast foreseene all my wayes: and there is not a word in my tongue, where then? euen in thy power. These thinges we learne by  
our



That labour and are laden. 57

our owne experience. For if we call to minde our life past, is it not a wonderfull thinge that we haue thought, willed, done and sayd such thinges, as we neuer coulde foresee, but woulde haue done farre other thinges, if we had bene left to our owne free will, which we nowe first perceine, namely we see that the hande of God hath bene so present with vs, that his care hath bene so constant ouer vs, that we coulde neyther haue spoken, neyther willed nor thought those thinges which we haue, vnles he had giuen ability, as it is sayd in the booke of wisdomie cap. 7: In his hande are both we and our wordes. And Paule sayeth: Who worketh all thinges in vs. Why then are we not ashamed being sensible and hard harted, who being taught by our owne experience, doe see howe careful the Lorde hath bene for vs vntill this houre, and hath giuen vs all good thinges and yet we can not committ the same care of vs to him in a small present euill, but doe so behaue our selues, as though he had forsaken vs, or coulde by any means forsake vs. Dauid did not so in the 39<sup>th</sup> psalme. Where he sayeth: As for me,



# 58 Consolations for them

I am poore and needy, but the Lord careth for me. How should he not, sayth B. Augu. It me, haue care of thee when as thou art nowe that, which he would thou shouldst be? But we part the rule between God and vs; we attribute this vnto him that he hath made vs, & yet we scarce or faintly do that, we arrogate to our selues the care of our selues, as though he had made vs, & had by and by gone away, leauing vs in our owne power to be ruled and gouerned.

*What we must doe when through the blindnes of our owne wisdom & vnderstanding we can not see the care of God ouer vs.*

If so be that our owne wisdom & counsels hinder vs, that we can not see this care of God ouer vs, when as perhapes many thinges fall out according to our purposes, let vs with Dauid Psal. 138 Enter into consideration of our selues. He sayeths My bones are not hid from thee, which thou hast made in a secret place, & that is, thou didst see and make my bones in the wombe of my mother, when as I yet was not, when as my mother did not yet knowe what was done in her) neither is it hid from thee that I was fashioned in the inner partes of the earth (that is, the Mapel or foyme of my bodie in the most inward bowells of my mother was not hid from thee



That labour and are laden 59  
thee, for that thou didest frame it ). What  
doth the Prophet meane by these wordes,  
but to declare vnto vs by this notable ex-  
ample, what care God hath alwayes had  
of vs without the knowledge or meanes of  
our selues? For who can glory that he hath  
bene a meane or helpe that he might be fa-  
shioned in his mothers wombe? Who  
made the mother haue a care to giue suck,  
to nourish, loue, and doe all such duties of a  
mother, when we did not as yet perceiue  
our life, yea whereof (vntil we seeing the  
like done in others, we did beleue that  
they were also done to vs) we should know  
or remember nothing at all, forasmuch as  
these thinges were done vnto vs, no other-  
wise them to them that sleepe, yea to them  
that be dead, or rather to them that are not  
yet bozne, as much as pertayneth to our  
knowledge.

Thus we see how without knowledge or  
meanes of our selues we enioye the mer-  
cies and consolations of God: We not-  
withstanding as yet doubt, or euen despaire,  
that he hath care of vs euen at this day.  
Whom this experience will not teach and  
moue, I know not what can teach & moue



*We must  
cast our  
care on  
God for  
that he ca-  
reth for vs.*

him. For we see this most manifestly ap-  
peare vnto vs commonly in al infants, so  
that so many examples set forth to our fol-  
ly & hardnes, ought worthely to make vs  
greatly ashamed, if we doubt that even the  
least good or euell commeth vnto vs with-  
out the singular care of God. Blessed Pe-  
ter sayth; Cast all your care on him, for he  
careth for you. And Dauid sayth Psal. 36:  
Cast thy care vpon the Lorde, and he shall  
feede thee. Moreover B. Augustine sayth  
vnto his soule in his cōfessions: Why stan-  
dest thou vpon thy selfe and standest not in  
deede? cast thy selfe vpon him, for he will  
not withdꝛaw his hand that thou maist sal.  
And againe Peter sayth, 1. Pet. 4: Where-  
fore let them that suffer according to the  
will of God, commit their soules to him in  
well doing, as vnto a faithfull Creator.

O, if a man knew his God after this sort,  
how secure, how quiet, how pleasant should  
he be? Such a one should haue God truely  
knowing assuredly þ whatsoeuer things  
either haue or do happen vnto him, þ same  
both haue come & do come vnto him, by the  
directiō & disposing of God his most swete  
will. The saying of Peter stādeth certaine

he



That labour and are laden 61

he careth for you. What can we heare more  
sweete & pleasant then this saying? therfore  
sayth he, cast all your care vpon him. If we  
do not this, what do we els, but endeuoꝝ to  
let & hinder y<sup>e</sup> care of God, & also make our  
liues vnto our selues troublefom, painfull,  
carefull, by many feares, cares & troubles?  
and that in vaine, for we doe not any thing  
hereby further our rest oꝝ quietnes, but as  
the Preacher in his booke sayth: This is  
a vanitie of vanities, and vexation of the spi  
rite. For in all the same booke he speaketh  
of experience hereof, inasmuch as he had  
tried many thinges for him selfe, and in all  
notwithstanding he founde nothing but la  
bour, vanitie & vexation of the spirit: so that  
he concludeth, that it is the gift of God, if a  
man eate & drinke, & reioice with his wife,  
that is, liueth without care, committing y<sup>e</sup>  
care of him selfe vnto God. Wherefore we  
ought to haue no other care of our selues,  
thē y<sup>e</sup> we may not be carefull for our selues  
& may commit the care of vs vnto God. As  
for other things that might be spokē here,  
euery one may as I haue sayd know them  
by the contrarie consideration, and by cal  
ling to mind his whole life past.

*What will  
ensue if we  
cast not our  
care on  
God.*



The fourth chapter of the fourth consideration, vvhich is of the good beneath vs.

*By comparing the state of the damned with our owne we shall perceiue the exceeding mercie of God toward vs, and the inestimable commodities which we enjoy through his goodnes.*

**H**itherto we haue seene the good things which are our owne, and in our selues, we will nowe consider those that are in others, and without vs: the first whereof is in them that are beneath vs, that is the dead and damned. Howebeit it seemeth verie straunge, that any good can be found in the dead and damned. But the power of the diuine goodnesse is euery where so great, that it maketh that we may see good things euen in the greatest euils. Now let vs first compare them with our selues, then shall we see our inestimable commodities, as it may easily be vnderstoode by the contrarie consideration of euils. For as great euils of death and hel as we see in them, so great without doute may we see our commodities to be, yea and so much greater, as their euils are greater, All which are not to be lightly passed ouer, forasmuch as they doe greatly commende vnto vs the exceeding mercie of God. And it is to be feared, that if



That labour and are laden 63

if we make small account of these, we shall be found unthankfull, and condemned together with them, or tormented worse, for that the more we see them to be grieved & sorrowfull, so much more ought we to reioyce for Gods goodnes toward vs, according to that saying in Esai chap. 65: Behold, my seruantes shall eat, but ye shall haue hunger: behold, my seruantes shall drinke, but ye shall suffer thirst: behold, my seruants shall be merie, but ye shall be confounded: behold my seruants shall reioyce for verie quietnes of harte, but ye shall crie for sorrow of harte, and complayne for vexation of minde: your name shall ye leaue accursed amonge my chosen, &c. Finally as I haue said, the examples of them that die ill, and are condemned, as B. Gregorie sayth in a certaine Dialogue, ought to bringe this good vnto vs, that they shoulde admonishe and teach vs, that he is happye, whome other mens harmes doe make to beware. Howbeit this good, forasmuch as it is commonly knowne, doth little moue vs, when as notwithstanding it is to be counted amonge the chese, and is not lightly esteemed of them that are wise: for



## 64 Consolations for them

asmuch as a great part of the holy Scripture tendeth herunto, namely where it is taught of the wrath, iudgements & threatenings of God. Which most wholesome doctrine, the examples of the most miserable should make most wholesome vnto vs, which then begin to be effectuell, when we are so affected as they are which suffer them, and as though we were in their place and person. For then will they moue and admonish vs to praise his goodnes, who hath preserved vs from those thinges.

*The consideration of the state of the damned ought to moue vs to reioice in God, and to prayse and extoll his iustice.*

These dead & damned must be compared also with God him selfe, whereby we may see his diuine iustice in them. This albeit it be harde, yet must we endeavour to doe it. For seeing that God is a iust Judge, his iustice must be loued and praysed: and therefore must we reioyce in God even then when he destroyeth the euill both in bodie and soule, because in all these his entire and unspeakeable iustice shineth. Wherefore hell also is full of God and the soueraigne good as well as heauen. For the iustice of God is God him selfe, and God is the soueraigne good. As his mercie therefore, so also his iustice or iudgement ought with  
most



That labour and are laden. 65

most hartie affection to be loued, and most highly to be extolled and praised. Whereupon David sayeth: The righteous shall reioyce when he seeth the vengeance: he shall washe his handes in the blood of the wicked. For this cause the Lorde forbade Samuell 1. Kinges. 16, that he shoulde moune no more for Saul, saying: Howe long wilt thou mourne for Saule, seeing I haue cast him awaye from reigning ouer Israel? As if he sayde: Doth my will so displease the, that thou preferrest mans will before mine? Finally hereupon come those sayings of praise and ioye through the whole Psalter, that the Lorde is a Judge of the widowes, and a Father of the fatherlesse, that he will auenge the afflicted and iudge the poore: that his enemies shall be confounded, the wicked shall be destroyed, and many suche like. If any will with foolish pitie haue compassion on that bloody generation, which slayeth the righteous (yea euen the Sonne of God) & of that exceeding great company of the wicked, he shall be found to reioyce at their wickednes, and to allow those things that they haue done, being worthe to pe-



rith together with them, whose sinnes he would not haue punished: and he shal heare that saying which is in the second booke of Kinges chap. 9: Thou louest thine enemies, and hatest thy frendes. For so sayde Ioab to Dauid, when he too much mourned for wicked Absolon his sonne. Wherefore we ought here to reioyce at all the godlines of the Sainctes, and the iustice of God, who most iustely punisheth the persecutors of godlines, that he may deliuer his elect from them. And so thou seest that not small but exceeding good thinges doe manifestly appeare in the dead and damned: namely, that the iniurie of all the Sainctes is reuenged and punished, and thine also if thou be righteous with them. What meruaile is it then, if by thy present euill he punish thine enemy, that is the sinne of thy body, yea thou oughtest to reioyce because of this most excellent benefite of Gods iustice, who, (thou not desiring it) so slayeth and destroyeth in thy selfe thy worst enemy, that is, thy sinne. Whereof if thou haue compassion. thou shalt be found a frend of sinne, and an enemy of iustice working in thee. which thou must especially



That labour and are laden 67

ally take heede of, least it be said vnto thee also: Thou louest thine enemies, and hastest thy friends. As therefore thou oughtest to reioyce on the behalfe of iustice beinge seuered against thy sinne, so oughtest thou to reioyce on the behalfe of the same also, beinge seuered against the wicked, which are enemies of God and men. Thus thou seest that in the greatest euills are scene singular good things, and that we may reioyce in the greatest euills, not because of the euills them selues, but because of the soueraigne goodnesse of Gods iustice that deliuereth and auengeth vs.

The fift Chapter of the fift consideration,  
vvhich is of the good on the  
left hande.

**H**ere must we enter into consideration of our aduersaries, who as yet remaine in this life (for in the chapter going before we haue spoken of them that are already damned and in like case with the deuills) these we must beholde with an other affection, and consider two sortes of their good things. First that they abound with



*The wicked  
most com-  
monly a-  
bound with  
temporall  
good things*

*God bestow  
eth abun-  
dance of  
temporall  
good things  
upon the  
wicked,  
that hee  
may there-  
by comfort  
vs.*

temporall good things, so that the Pro-  
phets haue bene almost moued euen to en-  
uie by their prosperitie, as David Psalm  
72. My feete were almost gone, my steps  
had well neare slip: for I feared at the foo-  
lish, when I saw the prosperitie of the wic-  
ked. And afterwarde: Loe these are the  
wicked, yet prosper they alway, and in-  
crease in riches. Ieremie chap. 12. sayeth  
O Lorde thou art more righteous then  
that I should dispute with thee, neuerthe-  
lesse let me talke with thee in thinges rea-  
sonable: Howe happeneth that the waye  
of the vngodly is so prosperous? and that  
it goeth so well with them, which without  
any shame offend and liue in wickednes?

Why doth he freely poure forth so ma-  
ny good things vpon them, and lose them  
but that he may comfort vs, and declare  
how good he is vnto them which are pure  
in hart as the same 72. Psalm sayeth. He  
that is so good to the wicked, how much  
more good will he be to the godly? albeie  
he tryeth them with many euills, so that  
not onely in the present good things, but  
also in them that be hid and as yet to come  
they acknowledge him to bee good vnto  
them



That labour and are laden. 69

them, and say with David in the same  
Psalme: As for me, it is good for me to  
drawe neare to God, to put my trust in the  
Lorde. As if he sayde: Albeit I feeke some  
trouble whereof I see them free, notwith-  
standing I trust that God is muche more  
gracious vnto me then vnto them. And so  
the visible good things of the wicked are a  
meane to stirre vs vp to hope for inuisible  
good thinges, and to contemne the euills  
that we suffer, according to the commaun-  
dement of Christ. Math. 6. where he bid-  
deth vs to beholde the foules of the ayre,  
and the Lillies of the fiede, and sayth: If  
God then so clothe the grasse of the fiede,  
which though it stand to day, is to morrow  
cast into the oven, shall he not doe muche  
more vnto you. O ye of litle fayth? Where-  
fore by comparing together y good things  
wherewith the euill abound, and the euill  
which we suffer, our faith is exercised, and  
we obtaine comfort in God, which one-  
ly is holpe and true comfort, so that all  
things worke together for the best vnto the  
Saintes.

The other good, which is much more  
meruelous, is, that their euills turne vnto

*The euills  
of the wic-  
ked turne*

*F*



unto good  
to the godly

our good, such a care hath God of vs. For although their finnes be offensive to the weaker sort, yet to the strong they are an exercise of vertue, and an occasion more strongly to fight, & to obtaine a more glorious victorie. For blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tryed he shall receiue the crowne of life. Now what is a greater temptation then that multitude of most wicked examples? Whereof is the worlde called one of the enemyes of the Sainctes of God, for that by the enticements and wicked workes thereof it moueth, prouoketh and allureth from the way of God vnto his owne way, as it appeareth Gen. 6. The sonnes of God sawe the daughters of men that they were faire, & they tooke them wiues such as they lyked from among them all. And Num. 25. it is saide that the children of Israel committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab, so that it is wholesome for vs to be alwaies afflicted with some trouble, lest that being weake, and stumbling at the offences of the worlde, we fall & sinne. Wherefore Lot is commended of Peter. 2. Pet. 2. for that he suffered many things by the most wicked



That labour and are laden 71

ked examples of the sodomites, & increased in righteousness hereby. It is needeful therefore that these offences come, which may be an occasion to vs to fight & obtaine the victory. Notwithstanding w<sup>e</sup> vnto the world because of offences. Nowe if in the sinnes of others God procureth vnto vs so great good things, how much more ought we to beleue with our whole hart that he will worke good vnto vs in our own euill, although the sense and fleshe iudge otherwise.

No lesse good doeth the worlde bringe vnto vs on the othe side of his euills, which is aduersitie. For whom it can not winne by enticements, neither adioyne to it selfe by euill examples, then it endeuoreth by afflictions to expell from it selfe, and to trouble them by painefull euills, alwayes either seeking deceitfully to entrap them by the example of the wicked, or cruelly raging against the by grievous torments. For this is that monster Chimera hauing a head fayre like the head of a virgin, a belly terrible like the belly of a Lyon, a tayle deadly like the tayle of a Serpent: for the ende as well of the pleasure as of the

*The troubles and afflictions. which the godly suffer of the world turne to their commodity & profit.*

If it



tyrannie of the worlde is poyson and eternall death. As therefore in the sinnes of the worlde God hath made vs to finde good thinges, so also the persecutions thereof are not in vaine and frustrate, but are ordained for the encrease of our good things that euen in that wherein they hurt vs, they may be compelled to profit vs, as B. Augustine speaketh of Herode who slue the childre: He could neuer (saith he) haue profited so much by obedience, as he profited by hatred. And B. Agatha went reioycing to the prison as vnto a banquet, saying after this sort: Unlesse thou make my body to bee handled throughly of thy tormētōrs, my soule can not with glorious victorie enter into Paradise: euen as the grayne if it be not well threshed and beatē out of the huske, is not layde vppē in the garner. But why doe we here stande vpon these fewe examples? seeing we knowe that the whole Scripture, the writings and sayings of all the Fathers, the works and deedes of all the Sainctes doe agree in this, that they are moste profitable to the beleeuers, who seeme to be vnto them moste hurtfull, so that they be rightly  
suffered



That labour and are laden. 73  
suffered and borne: as Peter sayeth in his  
first Epistle chap. 3. And who is it that  
can harme you, if ye follow that which  
is good? And David sayeth Psal, 88. The  
enemye shall not oppresse him, neither  
shall the wicked hurte him. Howe shall  
he not hurte him, when he oftentimes e-  
uen killeth him? surely because by hurting  
he doth greatly profite him. So we see  
that we doe on euerie side dwell in the mid-  
dest of good thinges, if we be wise, and yet  
also in the midst of euills, so meruelously  
are all things ordered by y power of Gods  
goodnes.

The sixt chapter of the sixt con-  
sideration,, vvhich is of the  
good on the right  
hande.

**T**his is the Church of the Sainctes, the  
newe creature of God, our brethren &  
friends, in whom we see nothing but good,  
nothing but consolation, howbeit not al-  
waies in fleshly eies (for according to y out-  
ward appearāce they are for y most part to  
be referred to the contrarie consideration

*The good  
on the  
right hande*



of euils) but with spiritual eyes. Although  
 euen those their good thinges also which  
 are seene with fleshly eyes, are not to be re-  
 iected, but we may perceiue that euen in  
 these God doth comfort vs. For Dauid in  
 the 72 Psalm he durst not disallow of all þ  
 possessed riches in this world, saying: If I  
 shoulde say that I woulde iudge after this  
 sort, lo then I should condemne the genera-  
 tion of thy childzen, that is, if I should say  
 that all are euill, which are rich, healthfull  
 and had in estimation, I shoulde then con-  
 demne thy Sainctes, of whom many are  
 such. The Apostle moreouer teacheth Ti-  
 mothe to charge them that are rich in this  
 world, that they be not hie minded, not for-  
 bidding the to be riche. And þ Scripture  
 declareth that Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob  
 were rich. Daniell with his fellows were  
 had in honour and reputation euen in Ba-  
 bylon: finally many Kings of Iuda were  
 holy men. Dauid therfore considering these  
 sayth: If I should say that I woulde iudge  
 so, I shoulde condemne the generation of  
 thy childzen. God I say giueth to his abun-  
 dance of these good thinges, to the comfort  
 of them & of others, but these are not their



That labour and are laden 75  
proper good thinges, yea they are but shadows in respect of the true good thinges, which are faith, hope, loue, and other graces and giftes, all which are made common by loue.

This is the communion of Sainctes, wherein we reioyce. And who doth not glory here euen in great euills, who beleueth, as it is in deede, that the good thinges of all the Sainctes are his good thinges, that his euill is theirs alio. For this consideration is most sweete and pleasant, whereof the Apostle admonisheth in the Epistle, to the Galathians in this saying: Beare ye one an others burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Is it not good for vs to be here, where if one member, as the Apostle saith 1. Cor. 12. suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be had in honour, al the members reioyce with it? Therefore when I suffer, I suffer not nowe alone, all Christians suffer with me, yea Christ him selfe, as it is sayd: He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye. So others beare my burde, their power is mine, the faith of the Church helpeth myne infirmitie, the chastitie of others beareth the temptation of my

*A description of the communion of Sainctes, and the ioy that may be taken thereby.*



lust, the fastings of others are for my commoditie, the prayer of an other is carefull for me, and briefly the members are so carefull one for an other, that those which are more honest doe couer, keepe, honour them that seeme dishonest, as the Apostle notably describeth I. Cor. 12. And so I may truely reioyce in the good thinges of an other, as if they were mine owne. Be it then that I be foule and filthy, yet they whom I loue, and with whom I reioyce, are fayre & goodly; by which loue I make not onely their good thinges, but euen themselves mine. Wherefore mine ignominie shall be easily honoured vnder their glorie, their abundance shall supply my want. Who can then despaire in sinne? who doth not reioyce in afflictions. for that he doth not now beare his sinnes and paynes, or if he beare them he beareth them not alone, being holpen with so many Sainctes that are the sonnes of God, yea being holpen of Christ him selfe? So excellent a thing is the communion of Sainctes, & the church of Christ.

Nowe if there be any that doth not beleue that these things are thus, he is an infidell,



That labour and are laden 77

swell, and hath denied Christ & the church.

For although these things were not felt, yet are they so in dede: but what true Christian doth not feele them? For y<sup>e</sup> thou doost not despaire, y<sup>e</sup> thou doost not become impatient, who is the cause? Thine own power? no surely, but the communion of Sainctes.

Otherwise thou were not able to beare euen a small sinne, thou couldest not suffer the worde of a man agaynst thy selfe: so nigh is Christ and the Church. This is that which we saye: I beeleue in the holy Ghost, the holy Catholike Church. the Communion of Sainctes. Nowe wherein doe the Sainctes communicate?

euē in good and euill thinges, all thinges are common amonge them all, as the Sacrament of the Lords supper doth signifie in the breade and wine, we are sayde of the Apostle to be one bread, one bodie. Nowe who offendeth a parte of the body, wherein he offendeth not the whole bodye? What doth y<sup>e</sup> litle toe suffer, which y<sup>e</sup> whole body doth not suffer? what good is done euē to the fete, wherein the whole body doth not reioyce, But we are one bodie: whatsoever another suffereth, I suffer and beare

*As in the  
Lords sup-  
per the  
bread is  
one though  
it consist of  
many  
graines, and  
the wine  
one though  
pressed out  
of many  
grapes: so  
the Sainctes  
being par-*



*takers of  
this Supper,  
though they  
be many,  
yet are they  
one body,  
and there-  
fore com-  
municate  
both in  
good and  
evil.*

the same, and whatsoever good is done to him, it is done to me, So sayth Christ, that it is done to him, whatsoever is done to the least of his. who taking a peece of y<sup>e</sup> bread of the Lordes Supper, is not sayd to take bread? who contemning a peece thereof, is not sayd to contemne bread.

Wherefore if we be griued, if we suffer, if we die, let vs remember and firmly beleue and be assured, that not we, or that not we alone, but Christ and the Church are griued, suffer and die with vs. Christ woulde not haue vs to be alone in the way of death, which euerie man dzeadeth, but the whole Church accompanying vs, we enter into the way of suffering and death, and the Church doth suffer moze strongly then we our selues, so that we may truely apply to our selues y<sup>e</sup> which Eliseus said to his seruaunt being afraid: 4. king 6: Feare not, for they that be with vs are moe then they that be with them: And Eliseus prayd and sayd: Lord I beseech thee open the eyes of this yong man that he may see: & the Lord opened the eyes of the yong man and he looked: and beholde the mountayne was full of hozses & charrets of fire rounde about



That labour and are laden 79

about Eliseus. This onely also remayneth  
vnto vs, that we pray that our eyes may be  
opened, that we may see the Church about  
vs, that, I say, the eyes of our faith may be  
opened, then shall we feare nothing, but  
shall perceiue that to be most true which  
David sayeth Psal. 124. As the moun-  
taines are about Ierusalem, so is the Lord  
about his people from hence forth and for-  
euer. Amen.

The seuenth chapter of the seuenth con-  
sideration, vvhich is of the  
good about vs.

I Speake nothing of the eternall and hea-  
uently good thinges, which the blessed en-  
ioye in the manifest sight of God, or at the  
least I speake of them in faith, and as they  
may be comprehended of vs. So this se-  
uenth consideration is of Iesus Christ, the  
King of glorie, raised from the deade: as  
the seuenth consideration of euills was of  
him suffering, deade, and buried. Here we  
may see the chiefe ioy of our hart, and cer-  
taine and sure good thinges: here is no e-  
uill at all, because Christ being raised from

*The good  
about vs  
& the most  
sweete ioy  
& comforte  
which the  
due consi-  
deration  
thereof  
bringeth.*



†  
p dead, dieth no moze: death hath no moze dominion ouer him. This is the furnace of loue, and the fire of God in Sion, as Esai sayth. For Christ is bozne vnto vs, and not onely that, but also geuen vnto vs. Wherefore his resurrection is mine and all things that he hath wrought thereby. And as the apostle most notablie glorieth Rom. 8: Howe shall he not with him giue vs all thinges? But what hath he wrought by rising agayne? He hath destroyed sinne, set vp righteousness, swallowed vp death, & restored life: overcome hell, and purchased eternall glorie. These thinges are inestimable, so that the minde of man dare scarce beleue, that they are giuen vnto him: as Iacob Gen 45. when he hearde that his sonne Ioseph was alive and gouernour ouer the lande of Egypt, as it were awaking out of a deepe sleepe, he did not beleue them that tolde him, untill they telling vnto him all the wordes of Ioseph, which he had sayde vnto them, shewed him also all the charrets, which Ioseph had sent to carie him. So surely it is harde to beleue that so great good thinges are in Christ bestowed vpon  
vs



That labour and are laden. 81

vs that are unworthy, unlesse in manye wordes he declare the same vnto vs, and as he made him selfe manifest to his Disciples by often appearing vnto them, so he teach vs so to beleue, as it were by charrets, that is, by vse and experience. It is a most goodly and pleasant charret, that of God he is made vnto vs wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, as the Apostle sayth 1. Cor. 1. For I am a sinner, but I am caried in his righteousness, which is giuen vnto me: I am uncleane, but his holines is my sanctification, wherein I am sweetely carped: I am foolish, but his wisdom carrieth me: I am damnable, but his liberty is my redemption: so that a Christian which beleueeth may gloze of the merits of Christ, and of all his good things no otherwise then if he him selfe had done the, so properly do they belong vnto him, so that he dare now quietly loke for euen the iudgement of God, which notwithstanding is intollerable. So great a thing is faich, so great good things doth it obtaine for vs, so glorious sonnes of God doth it make vs. For we can not be sonnes, unlesse we inherit the good things



father. A Christian therefore may boldly say: Death, where is thy victorie? death, where is thy sting, that is, sinne? for the sting of death is sinne, and the strength of sinne is the law, that is, the law maketh vs sinners, sinne maketh vs guiltie of death: but thanks be vnto God, which hath giuen vs victorie through our Lorde Jesus Christ. Who then hath overcome these two? Our owne righteousness? our owne life? no surely, but Jesus Christ raised frō death, who hath condemned sinne & death, hath imparted his righteousness vnto vs, hath giuen vs his merits, hath layde his hand vpon vs, so that we are in good case and doe fulfill the law, and ouer come sinne and death, for which honour, prayse and thanks be to God for ever, Amen.

This therefore is the last consideration whereby we are now lifted vp not onely aboue our owne euills, but also aboue our owne good thinges, and doe now enioy the good thinges of an other, gotten by an others labour, who before were oppressed with the euills caused by the sinne of an other, and increased by our owne: We enioy I say the righteousness of Christ, wher-  
by



by he him selfe is righteous, because we cleave vnto it, by which he pleaseth God, and maketh intercession for vs, & maketh him selfe wholy ours, being our most gracious Priest and Patron. As vnpossible therefore as it is that Christ in his righteousness should not please, so vnpossible is it that we should not please by our faith whereby we cleave to his righteousness. Whereby it cometh to passe that a Christian is omnipotent, Lord of all, possessing all thinges, doing all thinges, wholy without any sinne. And although it so be that he haue sinnes, yet can it not be that they should hurt him, but they are remitted because of his inuincible righteousness of Christ which swalloweth vp all sinnes, whereunto our faith trusteth, firmly beleuing that Christ is such a one vnto vs, as we saye. For he that doth not beleue that, heareth in vaine, acknowledgeth not Christ, neither knoweth whereunto he profiteth or serueth,

*A christian is said to be without sin, not in respect of the action of sinne, but inasmuch as sinne is not imputed to him for Chrstes sake*

Wherefore euen this one consideration, if there were no other, may minister vnto vs so much comfort, if it be well and duely had, that we may not onely not be grieved at our euils, but also reioyce in tri



84      Consolations for them  
bulations, scarce feeling them by reason of  
the ioy which we haue in Christ of which  
ioy our Christ, our Lord and God blessed  
foz euer, make vs partakers, Amen.

*The conclus  
sion.*

By these my cogitations most famous  
Prince, witnessing after a sort the dutie  
my small abilitie, I commende me to your  
most noble grace, being ready to perfozme  
greater thinges, if the power of my spirit  
were according to my desire. For I will  
alwayes be a dettour both to euery of my  
neighbours, but especially to your most  
noble Grace, whom our Lord Je  
sus Christ by his gracious good  
nes long p̄serue among vs,  
& at the last bring to him  
selfe by a blessed and  
happie ende,  
Amen.

Your Graces most humble and  
obedient subiect MARTIN LUTHER.



son of  
which  
blessed

amous  
dutie  
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forme  
spirit  
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